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DEPARTMENT OF STATE A/CDC/MR
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(A) or (B) EXEMPTIONS

EXDIS

REF: (a) Phnom Penh 278; (b) Phnom Penh 322

TODEL

SUBJ: Cambodian Situation and U.S. Policy
FOR CHARGE FROM ASSISTANT SECRETARY GREEN
~~FROM ASSISTANT SECRETARY GREEN FOR RIVES~~

1. Reftels have been very helpful in guiding our preliminary thinking about * and immediate reactions to Sihanouk's overthrow. As you know, we have tried to minimize public comment and to stay in line with other countries principally concerned.

2. At same time, we are trying to look a little farther ahead in determining how our policy should move. This is admittedly a speculative business, and we recognize all the difficulties of predicting outcome of present situation. At same time, we do not want to miss any opportunities

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EA/LC:PJBennett:cej	3-25-70	23133	EA - Marshall Green

CLEARANCES:
EA - Mr. Moore
S/S - Mr. Brandt
EA/LC - Mr. Corcoran
EA/ACA - Mr. Kreisberg

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of influencing it favorably or of helping to avoid some of the serious dangers which exist. I would be grateful for your thoughts and analysis of situation and possible USG lines of action.

3. Among questions we are considering are these: What should be our attitude toward Sihanouk and toward Lon Nol government in near future, pending clarification of their relative durability? What should we do if Lon Nol government asks us for military or economic help? What should our position be if Sihanouk regains power with support of Communist-backed insurgency? If VC/NVA intervene directly with military force to reinstate Sihanouk?

4. As necessary basis for decisions of this nature, of course, we need your judgment on several more specific questions. Perhaps most important is that of durability of Lon Nol government. We tend to believe that short-run

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odds are in favor of its survival, but that long-run prospect is ~~xxxx~~ bleaker as cliques and feuds develop within government and between it and National Assembly, and as insurgent pressure continues. Do you think government will forfeit any significant body of support by proclaiming a republic? Does any possibility remain for a compromise settlement with Sihanouk?

5. Realize you are already watching closely, as are we, for hints as to VC/NVN as well as Soviet and Chicom reactions. It appears to us Soviets share at least some of our interests in Cambodia, and that preservation of Cambodian neutrality would suit them better than possible /insurgency headed by Sihanouk under ~~xxxx~~ Chinese and North Vietnamese control. What influence do you think Soviets might have with Lon Nol government? The French? Could either of them help restrain FARK from precipitate action which ~~as~~

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as you point out ref b is one of principal dangers in situation? Do you see any possibilities for constructive joint action with French and Soviets - e.g., a package deal ~~wx~~ to bring back ICC to supervise referendum as proposed by Sihanouk, and at same time to restrict somewhat VC/NVA use of Cambodia without forcing VC/NVA into desperate measures?

6. It seems to us that an insurrection led by Sihanouk could present serious threat to Lon Nol government, even without ~~a~~ such massive direct Chicom/NVN support as to make Sihanouk appear a stooge or puppet. FARK is spread thin; there are certainly pro-Sihanouk officers here and there, in addition to officers who will regret loss of income from smuggling to VC/NVA. Appreciate your views on how extensive Sihanouk's remaining popular support might be, and on how

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easily this might be converted into viable insurgent movement.

7. Appreciate that all these questions cannot be answered at once but we will greatly value your views, however, tentative, as you develop them and have time to report them.

8. Comments from other recipients of ~~END~~ this message will also be greatly appreciated.

END

GP-1.

EXDIS REVIEW
Cat. A Caption removed; transferred to C/PADPC
Cat. B - Transferred to C/PADPC with additional items controlled by S/S
Cat. C - Caption and custody retained by S/S
Elizabeth Kelly
Sept. 27, 79

[illegible]

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